

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

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R 191815 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3730

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USEC BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

USUN NEW YORK 342

USMISSION NATO

USOCD PARIS 475

USMISSION GENEVA

COMICEDEFOR

NISRA KEFLAVIK

CINCLANT

UNCLAS REYKJAVIK 0704

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR IC UK GW

SUBJECT: FISHERIES DISPUTE: INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECHES

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. SPEECHES DELIVERED BY POLITICAL LEADERS ON ICELANDIC INDEPENDENCE DAY JUNE 17 LINKED MAINTENANCE OF ICELANDIC INDEPENDENCE TO SUCCESS IN FISHERIES DISPUTE AND WERE HIGHLY CRITICAL OF CONTINUING UK NAVAL PRESENCE. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIMIN JOHANNESSON ADDRESSED NATION ON ICELANDIC INDEPENDENCE DAY JUNE 17. SPEECH CONTAINED USUAL ELEMENTS OF PATRIOTISM
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AND NATIONAL PRIDE BUT BECAME EMOTIONAL ON SUBJECT OF BRITISH NAVAL PRESENCE WITHIN ICELANDIC FISHERIES LIMITS. JOHANNESSON SAID: " JUNE 17 THIS YEAR IS BEING OBSERVED UNDER UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES. TWO MAJOR POWERS THAT ARE OUR ALLIES (UK AND FRG) HAVE BULLIED US, IGNORED ICELANDIC LAWS AND RAVAGED ICELANDIC FISHING GROUNDS, THE NATURAL RESOURCE THAT IS THE LIFE INSURANCE OF THE ICELANDERS IN THE FUTURE. ONE OF THESE POWERS HAS RESORTED TO SUCH VIOLENT MEASURES AS SENDING WARSHIPS INTO ICELANDIC FISHERIES JURISDICTION TO PROTECT THE POACHERS ... WE ARE READY TO ENTER A PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT ON A SPECIFIED ADJUSTMENT PERIOD PROVIDING, OF COURSE, THAT CERTAIN CONDITIONS ARE MET. IT IS AND WILL BE AN ABSOLUTE CONDITION FOR DISCUSSIONS THAT THIS POWERFUL ALLY CEASE ITS MILITARY INTERVENTION IN ICELANDIC JURISDICTION AND WITHDRAW ITS WARSHIPS FROM THE ICELANDIC FISHING GROUND. NO ONE IS DISGRACED BY MAKING AN HONORABLE SETTLEMENT. NO PREDICTIONS WILL BE MADE HERE AS TO WHAT THE DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. HERE AS EVERY WHERE ELSE IT IS THE OUTCOME THAT IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE. SOME FOREIGNERS CALL THIS A COD WAR IN A HALF- MOCKING DEPRECATING TONE BUT FOR US THIS IS A WAR OF INDEPENDENCE, A STRUGGLE FOR THE DEFENSE OF OUR COUNTRY."

3. REYKJAVIK MAYOR BIRGIR ISLEIFUR GUNNARSSON (A MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITION INDEPENDENCE PARTY) DELIVERED A SPEECH CONTAINING THE SAME THEMES. HE EMPHASIZED DEPENDENCE ON FISHING AND FISH PROCESSING. HE SAID THAT ICELAND'S WELL- BEING WAS THREATENED BY OVER- EXPLOITATION OF THE FISHING GROUNDS AND THAT THE EXTENSION OF THE FISHERIES LIMITS HAD HAD THE UNANIMOUS SUPPORT OF THE ENTIRE NATION. HE SAID: " BECAUSE OF THIS ISSUE WE ARE OBSERVING OUR NATIONAL HOLIDAY UNDER UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES. AN OLD ALLY HAS ATTACKED US WITH VIOLENCE, AND BY THE USE OF ARMS HAS HINDERED NORMAL LAW ENFORCEMENT WITHIN THE NEW FISHERIES JURISDICTION ... THIS MATTER IS UPPERMOST IN THE MINDS OF ALL ICELANDERS AT THIS TIME. THE FOREIGN ENCROACHERS SHOULD KNOW THAT IN THIS VITAL MATTER THE ICELANDERS ARE UNITED AS ONE. FORCE WILL NEVER BEND US."

4. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE REYKJAVIK INDEPENDENCE DAY COMMITTEE, CITY COUNCILMAN MARKUS ORN ANTONSSON (ALSO A MEMBER OF THE OPPOSITION INDEPENDENCE PARTY), ALSO REFERRED TO ICELANDIC NATIONAL UNITY ON THE FISHERIES LIMITS DISPUTE IN HIS SPEECH WHICH OPENED THE DAY'S FESTIVITIES. IRVING
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